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# Traveler

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

MAY 2005

A GLOBAL GUIDE

2005

# HOT LIST

**116** best new  
hotels\*  
in the world!

**80** great new  
restaurants  
from Buenos Aires to Zurich

\*including 28 under \$200

**35** cool new  
night  
spots  
from Anguilla to Shanghai



U.S.A. \$4.50  
Foreign/Canada \$5.50

2005  
**HOT  
TABLES**

Its 20 tables overlook the ocean from three levels, the lowest of which has a tapas section and an open kitchen where chef Jean-Claude Du-

Four (who studied at the *École Hôtelière* in Bordeaux) can be seen chopping and tasting. Start with the sea scallops and shiitake mushrooms flavored with white truffle, arugula, and Parmesan salad or the seared foie gras with rhubarb. Move on to the sautéed fillet of turbot in a hazelnut crust served with artichoke, the quail breast kebab with satay sauce, or the sautéed sliced beef with potato mille-feuille and black truffle. Decadent desserts range from a biscuit topped with rhubarb, Parmesan cream, and red berries to Tanzanian chocolate fondant with a passion fruit sorbet (590-590-29-79-09; entrées, \$35–\$50).

**Jambu's | Canouan Island, St. Vincent & the Grenadines**

Chinese takeout was about the only Asian food in the Caribbean until the advent of Jambu's, a chic beachside restaurant at the new Raffles Canouan Resort. Blending tropical ingredients with tangy Far East flavors, the Singaporeans have transported a typical Asia-Pacific kitchen lock, stock,

and chilies to the far-off Grenadines. It's one of those menus where you can easily feast on just the starters—pan-seared marinated duck with hoisin sauce in rice paper rolls, soft-shell crab and lobster wontons, and coconut seafood *tom yam* soup. East and West also merge in main courses such as the barracuda smothered in red-chili curry paste and the lemon-grass-crusted lamb chops. Lofty wooden ceilings with turtle motifs mimic the style of the Carib Indians who once called this island home. The evening breezes and surf sounds drift through the open-sided dining room, candlelight flickering over the beachfront tables in one of the Caribbean's most romantic restaurants (784-458-8000; entrées, \$28–\$42).

**CHINA**

**Mei Mansion | Beijing**

As Beijing churns itself into a modern megalopolis, the city's old charm is rapidly vanishing. In the context of such a convulsive urban makeover, it's a delicious experience to head for the Shichahai district and Mei Mansion, an elegant new restaurant occupying the home of the late Mei Lanfang, one of Peking's most famous op-

**Piscatorial mecca: Laris's "seafood and more" bar is aptly named Claws, Wings & Fins.**

era singers. When you book, you're asked to set a price range for your meal; for \$40, dinner might begin with hors d'oeuvres of chopped quail, frog's legs, and tiny dumplings filled with dried chrysanthemum petals, followed perhaps by an herb-bright green soup. Entrées might include the delicate crayfish with a rice wine dipping sauce, the braised pork ribs with a lotus seed and lemongrass garnish, the steamed carp and its tripe, the sautéed noodles, or the wild watercress with ginger and garlic. The service is gentle and attentive, and the clientele an interesting mix of well-heeled Chinese and knowing expats (86-10-661-26-845; entrées, \$14–\$30).

**Hutong | Hong Kong**

The magical atmosphere of *hutongs*—the alleyways lined with courtyard houses in old Beijing—has been re-created in an ultramodern glass-and-steel skyscraper just a short walk from the Kowloon Star Ferry. High up on the twenty-eighth floor, Hutong combines historic charm and contemporary chic. Amid breathtaking panoramic views, antique furniture evokes the mood of *Raise the Red Lantern*. There are intimate tables and private rooms secluded by traditional wooden screens or moon gates. The high-end aesthetic extends to the bathrooms, where wooden water containers are filled via bamboo pipes. Start with drunken raw crabs and bamboo clams steeped in Chinese rose wine, then try crispy deboned lamb ribs, soft-shell crab with Szechuan red pepper, or eye-watering spicy prawns Chongqing style. Arrive in time for an aperitif at Aqua Spirit, Hong Kong's most glamorous bar, on the floor above (852-3428-8342; entrées, \$13–\$52).

**Jean Georges | Shanghai**

Shanghai's decade-long extreme makeover into an Asian hot spot means that haute cuisine is now center stage, which is why the opening of Jean-Georges Vongerichten's first restaurant outside the United States was greeted with as much fanfare as a cultural revolution. The legendary chef's menu re-creates its New York counterpart down to the last detail—from the seared scallops in reduced raisin sauce to the decadent chocolate-lover's dessert sampler. But once you step inside the 1916 neoclassical building on the Bund, Michael Graves's sumptuous decor, with its tiger-wood paneling and jewel-toned fabrics beneath the copper-leaved ceiling, leaves its sedate New York predecessor way behind. While the food matches Jean-Georges's high standards, here the view is the star: a sweeping panorama from the colonialist architecture of the Bund to



Laris | Shanghai

The restaurant has one of the few raw bars in Shanghai, with a dizzying array of seafood from around the globe

**ARGENTINA**

- Bobo Hotel, Buenos Aires ☺☺
- Faena Hotel & Universe, Buenos Aires ☺☺☺

**AUSTRALIA**

- Meringa Springs, Grampians National Park ☺
- Capella Lodge, Lord Howe Island ☺☺
- Byron at Byron Bay, New South Wales ☺☺
- Medina Grand, Perth ☺
- Henry Jones Art Hotel, Tasmania ☺☺
- Moondance Lodge, Yallingup ☺☺
- Yallingup Luxury Retreat, Yallingup ☺

**BHUTAN**

- Amankora, Paro ☺☺☺

**CAMBODIA**

- Sokha Beach Hotel, Sihanoukville ☺☺

**CANADA**

- Four Seasons Resort, Whistler, British Columbia ☺☺☺
- Hôtel Godin, Montreal, Quebec ☺☺

**CARIBBEAN**

- Beach House, Barbuda ☺☺☺
- Casa Colonial, Dominican Republic ☺☺☺
- Bravo, Vieques, Puerto Rico ☺
- Raffles Resort Canouan Island, St. Vincent and the Grenadines ☺☺

**CHINA**

- Fuchun Resort, Hangzhou ☺☺
- Jia, Hong Kong ☺☺

**CYPRUS**

- Thalassa Boutique Hotel & Spa, Paphos ☺☺

**ESTONIA**

- Georg Ots Spa Hotell, Kuressaare ☺☺

**FRANCE**

- Ostapé, Bidarray ☺☺
- The Clubhouse, Chamonix ☺☺
- Casadelmar, Corsica ☺☺
- Mercure Marseille Beauvau Vieux Port, Marseille ☺☺
- Beau Rivage, Nice ☺
- Hilton Arc de Triomphe, Paris ☺☺
- Hôtel Daniel, Paris ☺☺
- Hôtel de Sers, Paris ☺☺
- Hôtel du Petit Moulin, Paris ☺☺

**GERMANY**

- Radisson SAS Hotel, Berlin ☺☺
- East Hotel, Hamburg ☺☺

**GREECE**

- King George II, Athens ☺☺
- Semiramis Hotel, Athens ☺☺

**HUNGARY**

- Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace, Budapest ☺☺

**INDONESIA**

- Chedi Club at Tanah Gajah, Bali ☺☺☺
- Conrad Bali Resort & Spa, Bali ☺☺
- Losari Coffee Plantation Resort & Spa, Java ☺☺

**ITALY**

- Bulgari Hotel, Milan ☺☺☺
- The Straf, Milan ☺☺
- Relais Villa Matilde, Piedmont ☺☺
- La Sommità Relais Cultì, Puglia ☺☺☺
- Relais Villa San Martino, Puglia ☺☺☺
- La Coluccia, Sardinia ☺☺☺

**Hotel Adler Thermae, Siena ☺☺☺**

- L'Andana, Tuscany ☺☺☺
- Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal, Venice ☺☺

**LAOS**

- Maison Souvannaphoum, Luang Prabang ☺

**MALDIVES**

- Huvafen Fushi, North Male Atoll ☺☺☺

**MAURITIUS**

- Taj Exotica Resort & Spa ☺☺☺

**MEXICO**

- Hacienda Puerta Campeche, Campeche ☺☺
- Condesa df, Mexico City ☺☺
- Hacienda San Angel, Puerto Vallarta ☺☺
- Hacienda Petac, Yucatán Peninsula ☺☺☺



Great Scot Glasgow's Mar Hall

**MONACO**

- Hôtel Métropole, Monte Carlo ☺☺

**MOROCCO**

- Madada Mogador, Essaouira ☺☺
- Riad Heure Bleue, Essaouira ☺☺
- Ksar Char-Bagh, Marrakech ☺☺
- Riad el Fenn, Marrakech ☺☺☺
- Riad Farnatchi, Marrakech ☺☺

**THE NETHERLANDS**

- College Hotel, Amsterdam ☺☺☺
- Lloyd Hotel, Amsterdam ☺☺☺
- Lute Suites, Amsterdam ☺☺

**NEW ZEALAND**

- Great Mercury Island ☺☺☺
- On the Point, Lake Rotorua ☺☺

**POLAND**

- Hotel Le Regina, Warsaw ☺☺

**SINGAPORE**

- The Scarlet ☺☺

**SOUTH AFRICA**

- Cape Cadogan, Cape Town ☺☺☺
- The Pinnacle, Cape Town ☺☺

**Pezula Resort Hotel, Knysna ☺☺**

- Madikwe Safari Lodge, Madikwe Game Reserve ☺☺
- Phinda Zuka Lodge, Phinda Private Game Reserve ☺☺☺
- Castle on the Cliff, Plettenberg Bay ☺☺☺
- Grand Café and Rooms, Plettenberg Bay ☺☺

**SOUTH KOREA**

- W Seoul-Walkerhill, Seoul ☺☺

**SPAIN**

- Casa Camper, Barcelona ☺☺☺
- Hotel Cram, Barcelona ☺☺
- Neri Hotel, Barcelona ☺☺☺
- Hotel Urban, Madrid ☺☺☺
- Hotel Tres, Palma de Mallorca ☺☺
- Puro Oasis Urbano, Palma de Mallorca ☺☺☺
- Hotel Palau de la Mar, Valencia ☺☺

**SRI LANKA**

- River House, Balapitiya ☺☺☺
- Amangalla, Galle ☺☺☺
- Galle Fort Hotel, Galle ☺☺☺
- Amanwella, Tangalle ☺☺☺

**SWITZERLAND**

- Alden Hotel Splügenschloss, Zurich ☺☺☺
- Park Hyatt, Zurich ☺

**THAILAND**

- Mandarin Oriental, Dhara Dhevi, Chiang Mai ☺
- Rachamankha, Chiang Mai ☺
- Anantara, Chiang Rai ☺☺
- Kirimaya, Khao Yai National Park ☺☺
- Sila Evason Hideaway, Koh Samui ☺☺☺
- Trisara, Phuket ☺☺☺

**TUNISIA**

- Villa Didon, Carthage ☺☺

**TURKS & CAICOS**

- The Palms, Providenciales ☺☺

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

- Al Qasr, Dubai ☺☺

**UNITED KINGDOM**

- Hope Street Hotel, Liverpool, England ☺☺
- Baglioni Hotel, London, England ☺
- Guesthouse West, London, England ☺☺
- Soho Hotel, London, England ☺☺☺
- The Zetter, London, England ☺
- Malmaison, Belfast, Northern Ireland ☺☺
- Mar Hall, Glasgow, Scotland ☺☺

**UNITED STATES**

- Calistoga Ranch, Napa Valley, California ☺☺
- Le Parker Meridien, Palm Springs, California ☺☺
- Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa, San Diego, California ☺
- Hard Rock Hotel, Chicago, Illinois ☺☺
- Hotel on Rivington, New York, New York ☺
- 70 Park Avenue, New York, New York ☺
- Jupiter Hotel, Portland, Oregon ☺
- Inn at Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina ☺☺
- Sanctuary at Kiawah Island, South Carolina ☺☺☺
- Thunderbird Hotel, Marfa, Texas ☺☺
- Hotel Ändra, Seattle, Washington ☺☺
- Mandarin Oriental, Washington, D.C. ☺☺☺

**KEY TO SYMBOLS**

- ☺ = Bar/lounge ☺☺ = Beach ☺☺☺ = Gym
- ☺☺☺ = Pool ☺☺☺☺ = Spa ☺☺☺☺☺ = 24-hour room service
- ☺ = Hot ☺☺ = Hotter ☺☺☺ = Hottest



February. **Which room to book:** Any oceanfront suite (809-320-3232; vhhrr.com; doubles, \$350-\$420; ☎). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

**Bravo, Vieques, Puerto Rico**

🍷 The beachfront Bravo sits on the northern coast of the still-sleepy island of Vieques, seven miles off Puerto Rico. Formerly a nothing-special motel, it has reopened as a stylish compound painted in David Hockney pastels; in seven of the nine rooms and in the adjacent two-bedroom villa, you can look straight out to sea from floor-to-ceiling windows. Inside, rooms flaunt Frette linens, DVD players, Nintendo, and wireless Internet access. Bathrooms are tiny (no tubs) but are stocked with thick towels and Aveda toiletries. Although there is no proper restaurant, a Dean & DeLuca-style grocery called Chef Michael's FoodSpace sells imported wines, cheeses, and other fancy foodstuffs, and a few nights a month Chef Michael himself serves dinner by the pool; at other times, guests in search of good food simply have to walk a few minutes into town. **When to go:** December through May. **Which room to book:** Nos. 3 through 7, which have balconies with ocean views (787-741-1128; bravo-beachhotel.com; doubles, \$160-\$115). 🍷 🍷 🍷

**Raffles Resort Canouan Island, St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

🍷 The first Caribbean progeny of Singapore's legendary Raffles Hotel chain, this multifaceted resort sprawls across nearly two-thirds of Canouan Island; indeed, each of its 156 rooms and suites comes equipped with a golf cart for guests to tool around in. Boldly colored walls (navy, ocher), hand-painted tiles, and rich Italian textiles lend the rooms a Mediterranean air, complemented by such high-tech touches as flat-screen TVs and Lavazza espresso machines. Its three pristine beaches—including ultrasecluded, clothing-optional Maho Bay—would be enough to push Raffles into the top tier of Caribbean resorts, but the hotel also has an 18-hole par-72 golf course, a Trump casino, four restaurants, and a swank spa overlooking Godahl Beach. **When to go:** Anytime but hurricane season (Aug.-Oct.). **Which room to book:** Personality Suites with patios and plunge pools, especially those in Villas 10 and 11 overlooking Carenage Bay (784-458-8000; www.affles-canouanisland.com; doubles, \$385-\$475). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

CHINA  
**Jia, Hong Kong**

🍷 Every neighborhood in Hong Kong has its Guccis and Louis Vuittons, but now Causeway Bay can also boast of its very own Philippe Starck hotel. The 57-room Jia is a slice of Miami's South Beach on Hong Kong island. The look—white marble, lots of mirrors, Starck's signature jumble of old and new—is a tantalizing alternative to the grand hotels of Kowloon. Other reasons to stay include its shopping-mecca location, rooftop sundeck, and friendly and informed staff—follow their restaurant suggestions, and by all means have them put your name on the list at the affiliated hot spot, Kee Club. **When to go:** New Year's, for off-season rates and post-holiday shopping. **Which room to book:** This being Hong Kong, you won't want to spend much time sitting around, so the smaller studios are sufficiently roomy and all have kitchenettes (852-3196-9000; www.jiahongkong.com; doubles, \$205-\$310). 🍷

GREECE  
**Thalassa Boutique Hotel & Spa, Paphos**

🍷 Situated on a small peninsula 20-odd miles from the mythological birthplace of Aphrodite, this 58-room hotel salutes ancient civilization in highbrow style with a resident archaeologist and a dedicated butler for every room. Trained by Frederick Broodyrke, a former manservant of Nelson Mandela, the 58 multitaskers do it all—starting with a pampered airport pickup from either Paphos (35 minutes) or Larnaca (90 minutes) that includes pillows, slippers, and appetizers. Serene contemporary rooms have polished-wood floors, plush suede sofas and chairs, locally handcrafted wood furniture, marble bathrooms, flat-screen TVs, DVD players, and terraces overlooking the azure sea and the 1250 B.C. ruins of the first Mycenaean settlement on Cyprus. Thalassa's innovative Anagenisis Spa offers ancient Byzantine, Greek, and Roman therapies. For dining under the stars, there's the intimate seafood restaurant π, and Cypriot and Mediterranean cuisine at Ambrosia. **When to go:** Spring or fall for temperatures in the seventies and eighties. **Which room to book:** Demetria, a corner suite with sunrise and sunset views (357-268-81500; thalassa.com.cy; doubles, \$365; ☎). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

ESTONIA  
**Georg Ots Spa Hotell, Kuressaare**

🍷 Until someone opens, say, the Maria Callas Ayurvedic Center, this will likely remain the world's only hotel named after

a long-dead opera singer. This 91-room property on the coast of Kuressaare—a seaport on Estonia's largest island, Saaremaa—has panoramic views of the Baltic and the thirteenth-century Bishop's Castle.

Rooms are furnished with white linens, pale-wood furniture, and colorfully striped carpets inspired by traditional Estonian skirts. Spa treatments are expert, invigorating, and—by U.S. standards—a steal: \$35 for a 75-minute marine-algae body wrap and \$50 (for up to five people) for the signature 40-minute soak in a tub laced with juniper. **When to go:** The June 23 celebration of midsummer is the biggest holiday other than Christmas. **Which room to book:** Any with Baltic (as opposed to Bishop's Castle) views (372-45-50-000; www.gospa.ee; doubles, \$90; ☎). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

FRANCE  
**Ostapé, Bidarray**

🍷 Alain Ducasse's new auberge in Bidarray, with just 22 rooms divided between four new villas and the original farmhouse, is set on 90 acres deep in the Basque Country. Each room is handsomely outfitted with raw linen, *tomettes* (unglazed terra-cotta tiles typical of authentic French farmhouses), antiques, and contemporary pieces made from waxed oak. Great details include en suite espresso machines, flat-screen TVs, CD players, and a selection of books in English, French, and German. The heated pool is on a terrace with mesmerizing views, and meals are served in cozy oak-paneled dining rooms in the main farmhouse. Note that authentic Basque cooking can be had just down the road at the excellent Auberge Iparla, also run by Ducasse. **When to go:** June, the perfect time to appreciate the verdure of the Basque countryside. **Which room to book:** Splurge on Sahatsa, a duplex with gorgeous views (33-5-59-37-91-91; ostape.com; doubles, \$280-\$410; ☎; open April-Oct.). 🍷 🍷 🍷

**The Clubhouse, Chamonix**

🍷 Chamonix has been made safe for the *Wallpaper* set with the opening of this seven-room hotel, carved out of a 1927 Art Deco mansion with gorgeous views of Mont Blanc. The atmosphere is akin to a house party, since two of the rooms are "bunkhouse" suites that can sleep from five to seven hard-skiing, hard-partying types. Accommodations are luxuriously kitted out with feather comforters, fur hot-water bottles and throws, flat-screen TVs, wireless Internet access, and power showers. There are a variety of massages on offer to

